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New South

FORMERLY THE SOUTHERN FRONTIER

Negro Police in Southern Cities

City	Negro Uniformed Policemen	Negro Plainclothesmen	Negro Policewomen
Little Rock, Ark.	4		
Clearwater, Fla.	5		
Daytona Beach, Fla.	6		
Deland, Fla.	1		
Fort Myers, Fla	2		
Gainesville, Fla.	2		
Key West, Fla.	2		
Miami, Fla.	20		
Sanford, Fla.	1		
Tampa, Fla	8		
Savannah, Ga.	9		
Lexington, Ky.		2	1
Louisville, Ky.	15	6	2
Owensboro, Ky.	2		
Ahoskie, N. C.	1		
Asheville, N. C.	2		
Charlotte, N. C.	10		
Durham, N. C.	7		
Greensboro, N. C.	6		
High Point, N. C.	2		
Raleigh, N. C.		2	2
Winston-Salem, N. C.	5		
Muskogee, Okla.	2		
Oklahoma City, Okla.	6	5	
Tulsa, Okla.	13		1
Summerton, S. C.	(Exact number unknown)		
Clover, S. C.	1		
Chattanooga, Tenn.		3	
Knoxville, Tenn.	7		
Austin, Tex.	5		
Beaumont, Tex.	2		
Dallas, Tex.	2		
Galveston, Tex.	11	5	
Houston, Tex.	4	2	
San Antonio, Tex.	9		
Port Arthur, Tex.	6		
Newport News, Va.	4		
Norfolk, Va.	7		
Petersburg, Va.			1
Richmond, Va.	5		
Roanoke, Va.	4		

	States	Cities	Uniform	Plainclothes	Policewomen
TOTALS	10	41	196	25	7

South Finding Negro Policemen Valuable, SRC Poll Shows

By Margaret Price

Research Assistant, Southern Regional Council

A POLL recently conducted by the Southern Regional Council reveals that forty-one Southern cities and towns, representing ten states, are now using Negro policemen.

The results of the poll showed a total of 221 Negro police officers employed in the South, 196 in uniform and 25 as plainclothesmen. Five cities reported that they are also using Negro policewomen, of whom there is a total of seven in the South.

The figures were obtained by means of a questionnaire sent to the police departments of all Southern cities in which there was reason to believe Negro police were being used.

Comments offered by many chiefs of police indicated that Negro policemen are proving highly satisfactory in all localities where they are used. All of those commenting declared that the Negro officers have been valuable in the suppression of crime in colored communities. One chief of police stated that "crime in the district to which they are assigned has dropped 25 percent."

A number of cities reported that, owing to the excellent results obtained, more Negro policemen are to be employed in the near future. Others which do not yet have Negro police stated that they are planning to employ them as soon as the necessary appropriations are made available.

One Southern city—Galveston, Tex.—announced that it has had Negro police officers since 1870.

Following are some of the more revealing comments made by chiefs of police of the cities indicated; many others merely noted "excellent" or "satisfactory service" on the questionnaire.

Miami, Fla. — "Colored police officers have been a great asset in the suppression of crime in our colored districts and have been extremely valuable in handling of inter-racial problems. Greater cooperation is obtained from all elements of our colored population through this medium."

Dallas, Tex. — "These two officers are assigned in the area of the heaviest concentration of Negro population. They are both college graduates and met the same requirements set up for white officers. Through their presence and efforts, crime in the district to which they are assigned has dropped 25 percent."

Newport News, Va. — "Our Negro police have done an excellent job. They work in uniform in a colored area, and we expect to employ two more in the near future."

Greensboro, N. C. — "It is with pleasure that we share with you the profitable experiences we have had with our six Negro police officers here in our city, the first two having been employed by this Department on January 19, 1944. Their services have been very satisfactory, and at all times we have had the cooperation of our white officers and also of the public in the colored districts in which they are working. I am glad to say that the Negro officers are a contribution to the Negro districts and an asset to our Police Department.

San Antonio, Tex. — "The City of San Antonio is fortunate in having some of the best Negro officers that can be had. They are loyal and efficient policemen and take pride in their work. These officers are under the command of white officials. They work both in uniform and in plain clothes and perform their duties in Negro districts only. We feel that they do an invaluable police service."

How Negro Police Worked Out In One Southern City

By Harold C. Fleming

IT MIGHT have been a scene in the municipal court of any Southern city. The defendant, a Negro man about forty years old, was accused of assault and battery, disorderly conduct, and resisting arrest. The police officer who had made the arrest gave his testimony briefly and clearly. There was dignity and assurance in his bearing, in the way he wore his uniform, and in the way he presented his testimony. One by one the witnesses—all Negroes—appeared before the court and testified. They held their heads high and spoke without hesitation. The defendant himself then pleaded drunkenness as an excuse for his acts. He was found guilty as charged and given a stiff jail sentence. The case was closed.

Not Just Any Case

It might have been a routine case in the municipal court of any Southern city—except for one or two things. In the first place, the city was Greensboro, N. C. In the second place, the Negro witnesses were frank and cooperative and seemed eager to see that justice was done. This is not always true in Southern courtrooms. In the next place, the policeman knew what was expected of him and gave it simply and succinctly. His knowledge of proper courtroom procedure is not always found among policemen, in the South or elsewhere. In the fourth place, the judge and the spectators were serious and attentive as the case was presented; they seemed to find it quite important that a Negro had attacked a member of his own race. And, finally, this case was not just any case in any courtroom because the policeman was a Negro.

This scene couldn't have taken place even in Greensboro four years ago, for there were no Negro policemen there then. True, there had been talk of employing Negro policemen. In fact, the idea had been discussed for about fifteen years. But it had never been put into practice because too many people felt that "it just wouldn't work." The reasons why it wouldn't work seemed to them self-evident.

"Colored people wouldn't have any respect for a Negro policeman," they said. "It takes a white policeman to have any authority in a colored section. Besides, it will lead to race trouble. What if a Negro policeman tries to arrest a white man? White folks won't stand for that."

More Arguments

They had other arguments, too: Greensboro's white policemen wouldn't work on the same force with Negroes; it wouldn't be possible to find Negroes who were intelligent and dependable enough to trust with so much responsibility; and finally, of course, there was the inevitable protest that using Negro policemen wasn't in keeping with Southern tradition.

But those who championed the proposal weren't to be put off so easily. Negro policemen were being used with great success in Charlotte, Raleigh, Winston-Salem, and other Southern cities. There were plenty

The use of Negro policemen has gained wide support in the South. But there are many Southern cities which do not have Negro policemen and want to know more about them. In order to get a first-hand look, Harold C. Fleming of the Council staff paid a visit to Greensboro, N. C. This article relates what he found.

of highly qualified Negroes who were willing to apply for the job if it were authorized. Far from opposing the idea, most of Greensboro's Negro population was enthusiastically in favor of it. These were the answers that Negro leaders and progressive white citizens took to the city manager, the chief of police, and the city council.

A Few Pertinent Facts

In order to get a clear idea of the situation, it might be well to pause here and take notice of a few pertinent facts about Greensboro. In 1940 Greensboro had a population of about 59,000. It is one of the few cities in the nation having an army camp within the city limits and within walking distance of the center of town. At the time with which we are concerned, the camp served as an overseas replacement depot and housed between thirty and forty thousand men, both white and Negro. So, when the use of Negro police was being urged, especially difficult police problems existed in the city. These problems did not disappear overnight with the end of hostilities, for the camp later served as a separation center. The authorities knew that if a test were to be made it would be under trying conditions.

There were also favorable circumstances for proponents of the plan. Of Greensboro's 59,000 people, 16,000, or 27 percent, were Negroes. Though Negro spokesmen had been urging the use of Negro police for fifteen years or more, the potential voting power of the Negro population had never been effectively used to help bring the move about. But in 1943 a relatively large number of Negro voters were registered. What is more, they were kept informed of the efforts their leaders were making and the response those efforts were receiving. In short, the strength of the Negro ballot was brought to bear on the question. This does not mean that the Negro vote was the only important factor in the campaign for Negro police. But, more than any other one thing, it assured the proposal a fair hearing and serious consideration by city authorities.

Those who favored the employment of Negro police were also fortunate in having a man like City Manager Henry A. Yancey to deal with. Mr. Yancey, who is now city manager of Charlotte, had previously managed three Southern cities with Negro populations ranging from 27 to 42 percent. His record was one of scrupulous fairness to all citizens, regardless of race or economic status. Nor was the idea of using Negro policemen new to him. He had come to Greensboro with a good deal of information on the subject.

"I must admit," says Mr. Yancey, "that I was cool to the proposal at first. This was not for any reasons of prejudice on my part; I had only recently left Durham, where I had already put the plan into effect. I simply wasn't convinced that the Greensboro public was sufficiently prepared for such a move."

Trial Appointment

But it wasn't long before Mr. Yancey decided that the proposal at least warranted an experiment, and in October, 1943, the City Council, upon his recommendation and that of the chief of police, authorized the appointment of two Negro officers on a trial basis. This is how Mr. Yancey describes the result:

"The white population accepted the action with scarcely a comment; it is certainly true to say that there was no protest. The Negroes received it with great acclaim, and the press, both local and in the surrounding states, hailed it as a 'step forward.'

"Obviously the ultimate success or failure of the experiment depended in a great measure upon the caliber of the men selected, and we set about to obtain the best possible talent. Naturally all applications were received and considered. Our requirements for appointment had been greatly modified due to the war emergency, and if we insisted upon a higher standard for Negro applicants than we did for the whites, we were

risking the charge of discrimination. However, we overcame this by enlisting the aid of the various Negro groups in securing for us applications from good men, constantly impressing upon them the importance of our first selections. The two appointments were not actually made until the 19th of January, 1944.

"These men were given careful training and instruction by the best officers we had on the force, for a period of six weeks. They were then assigned to the plain clothes department for approximately four months, after which time they were placed in uniform and assigned to duty in the largest strictly Negro section of the city.

Permanent Policy

"As I have already said, they were appointed on a trial basis. However, on March 1st, 1945, we appointed two additional Negro officers, and since that time two more have been added to the force. This in itself was enough to remove any doubt as to the efficiency and usefulness of these men and established as a permanent policy the use of Negro officers in Greensboro.

"These men were given exactly the same authority that the white officers have. I am of the opinion that there is no legal way to confer less authority upon them. Once they have taken the oath of office, they have all the duties and responsibilities imposed by law. We never entertained the thought of restricting their authority. They have worked only in the Negro sections, and their activity has been governed only by instructions, training, and what good judgment on their part would dictate.

"There have been a few cases where they were forced to give a traffic citation and to make an arrest of a white person, where the circumstances were such that they would have otherwise been guilty of neglect of duty. In each of these cases their attitude and demeanor has been such as to reflect credit upon themselves and the department and no untoward incidents have resulted.

"The work of these men has been excellent, equal in every respect to that of the white officers. They have gained the confidence, respect, and admiration of the white officers, and on a number of occasions they have received special praise and commendation from their superior officers for meritorious conduct under very trying circumstances."

What about the claim of the skeptics that Negroes would not cooperate with officers of their own race? The answer is apparent to anybody who will take the trouble to stroll down East Market Street, which runs through the heart of Greensboro's largest Negro section. East Market has the reputation for being a "tough" district, and, in accordance with the policy of the Greensboro Police Department, the Negro officers work in pairs. "Not that it's necessary," commented one Negro storekeeper. "Why, if one of those fellows needed help, all he'd have to do is crook his little finger and people would come running from all directions." You can easily see that Greensboro's Negroes are proud of their policemen, for as the Negro officers walk past on their tours they are greeted on every side with friendliness and respect.

A Transformed Street

One thing the casual observer might not realize, however, is the transformation that has taken place on East Market Street in the past four years.

"Before we got Negro policemen," says the Rev. J. J. Green, a Negro minister, "East Market Street was so dangerous you didn't dare walk down it with your wife. Now the street is unimaginably changed. You don't even hear bad language any more."

The Negroes of Greensboro are not the only ones who are proud of the Negro officers. Police Chief L. L. Jarvis needs little urging to tell you how well they have performed. Chief Jarvis, who began his police career as a rookie cop in 1919, has some pretty definite ideas about police officers.

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Episcopalians Commend SRC at Annual Synod

The annual Synod of the Protestant Episcopal Church Province of Sewanee, which convened in Atlanta on October 15 and 16, passed a resolution commending the work of the Southern Regional Council and donating $100 to the operating fund of the Council. The resolution was presented to the Synod as a recommendation by the Provincial Department of Christian Social Relations.

The recommendation read as follows: "We commend the resolution passed by the Provincial Synod in 1944: 'The Synod commends to the attention and active cooperation of the various Departments of Christian Social Relations the work of the Southern Regional Council.' This Council's long-time goal is the improvement of social, civic, economic, and racial conditions in the South. This is recommended by your church as one important way in which you can help in the most important problem of race relations."

It was also urged that churchmen in the Province take out individual memberships in the Council.

Among the other matters brought to the attention of the Synod by the Department of Christian Social Relations was the flare-up of race conflict in Columbia, Tenn., last year. The Council's report on the incident was commended, and copies of it were distributed at the Synod.

Dr. George S. Mitchell, executive director of SRC, appeared before the Department of Christian Social Relations at its meeting on October 14 to explain the policies and program of the Council.

Southern Film Service Offers New Medium for Education

A new method of attacking Southern problems has been made available to Southern organizations and agencies through the Southern Educational Film Production Service.

Heretofore the South has been depicted in movies made in Hollywood either as a land of romance or as a land of the sordid. The new Film Service has set out to show the South as it actually exists.

The Film Service, now in its second year of operation, was established with the aid of a grant from the General Education Board in May, 1946. Its services—including planning, production, and help in distribution of films—are designed specifically for those agencies most concerned with public welfare in the South.

Using the documentary techniques developed in Great Britain and Canada, the young organization is at work on a series of films dealing with various aspects of this region's problems and progress. The films completed so far are proving particularly effective in presenting educational programs of Southern agencies to a wide general public. Individuals who lack the education and interest necessary to benefit from printed material find the documentary films both entertaining and easy to understand.

In its first year of operation, the Film Service released three films, and it now has eight more in production. Three of these are scheduled for release before the end of 1947.

Agencies that are taking advantage of the service include planning commissions, health departments, agricultural extension services, and educational institutions. The most ambitious project to date is a twenty-minute film sponsored by the North Carolina Department of Public

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Rev. V. O'Connell Honors Guy Johnson and SRC

At the recent annual meeting of the Catholic Committee of the South, the Reverend Vincent J. O'Connell, Chairman, paid tribute to Dr. Guy B. Johnson, who received the Committee's annual award for progressive leadership in the South.

Father O'Connell spoke, in part, as follows:

"Dr. Johnson has a special talent for putting forth new ideas with such reasonableness and without appeal to passion that many who are but little inclined to his views come to agree with him much more than they had previously dreamed possible. This fair, gentlemanly, and scholarly approach has won for him friends in both the old and the new South . . .

"He knows the South's geography, its population, its culture, its attitudes, its very heart and soul. It is because of this knowledge that he has the unusual ability, even in these days of confusion, to point out the next and the right step towards the goal of a South enriched and strong with the riches and power of God and man . . .

"In honoring Dr. Johnson tonight, we are also honoring the Southern Regional Council. Certainly there is no other organization interested in the South's future for the nation which commends itself to all men of good will more than does the Southern Regional Council. The Council's factual analysis of the South's problems and potentialities, presented with distinctly Southern approach, is a lasting contribution to the building of our new South. The Catholic Committee of the South concurs wholeheartedly with the purpose of the Council expressed in its charter as follows:

"'. . . the improvement of economic, civic, and racial conditions in the South, in the endeavor to promote a greater unity in the South in all ef-

(*Continued on page* 8)

Greensboro's Negro Police

(*Continued from page* 5)

"I don't like bullies," he says, "and I don't believe a policeman ever gets too old to go to school." The Negro policemen have proved more than satisfactory on both counts. "They've shown tact and common-sense in performing their duties," says the Chief. "All six of them are college men, and they learn quickly and thoroughly."

Chief Jarvis has been consulted many times by officials of Southern cities contemplating the employment of Negro police. He has one answer for all of them. "If the right men are picked and given the right kind of training and support, only one thing can result—a better and more efficient police department." According to Chief Jarvis, any city which has a large Negro population and has no Negro police is simply denying itself the chance to have better law enforcement.

White Officers' Attitude

As for the attitude of the white policemen, Chief Jarvis recalls that when the proposal was first made "there were a few who didn't like the idea." But once the Negro officers were actually appointed, the objections melted away into thin air. And since that time there has never been any question of bad relations between the white and Negro officers. Perhaps the fact that the Police Department offers its members a course in race relations has something to do with it.

After four years of using Negro policemen, Greensboro no longer looks on them as an innovation, but has accepted them as a natural and normal part of the life of the city. This attitude is perhaps best summed up by the comment of a local newspaperman.

"Negro police?" he said. "They're not news in Greensboro, any more than white policemen are." He thought a moment and then added, "It might be news, though, to remind our people that we haven't always had them."

Rev. V. O'Connell Tribute

(*Continued from page* 7)

forts toward regional and racial developments; to attain through research and action programs the ideals and practices of equal opportunity for all people in the region; to reduce race tension, the basis of racial tension, racial misunderstanding, and racial mistrust; to develop and integrate leadership in the South on new levels of regional development and fellowship; and to cooperate with local, state, and regional agencies on all levels in the attainment of the desired objectives.'

"May our humble ceremonies here tonight serve as a spark added to the fire of enthusiasm which burns in the hearts of the leaders in the new South. May it serve as a gesture of encouragement to all those who are determined to face our social problems with candor, discuss them frankly with moderation and charity, and courageously accept the solutions which are arrived at through right reason and Christian principles.

"With such leadership, we will, please God, wipe away all stains from Southern culture, preserve the best in that culture, and bring forth a South which is the pride of the nation and the world."

Southern Film Service

(*Continued from page* 6)

Health. The film, produced in 16 mm., shows the citizens of North Carolina what they can do to improve their own health and the health of their communities.

The Film Service is limited by its by-laws to producing films on a cost basis for tax-supported agencies, but private organizations can make use of the service by securing the sponsorship of a tax-supported institution.

Detailed information about the Film Service can be obtained by writing the Southern Educational Film Production Service, University of Georgia, Athens, Ga.

Ashby Jones Fund Makes Grant

A grant of $100 was received recently by the Southern Regional Council through the generosity of the Ashby Jones Memorial Fund, established in February, 1947, to commemorate the life and ideals of the late Dr. M. Ashby Jones, a co-founder of the Commission on Interracial Cooperation.

In a report to the donors of the fund, Kendall Weisiger, founder and administrator, announced the grant to the Council and four additional grants to organizations devoted to the promotion of good will between men of various faiths, races, and nations. The other organizations receiving grants were the Georgia Commission on Interracial Cooperation, the Fellowship of Southern Churchmen, the Georgia Conference of Christians and Jews, and the East-West Association.

"This report," wrote Mr. Weisiger, "is presented to inform the donors of the purposes and accomplishments of the Fund, and to thank them for their generous response to the appeal to participate in the enterprise. Others who desire to join in keeping alive the spirit of the man are invited to participate."

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To attain through research and action programs the ideals and practices of equal opportunity for all peoples in the region.